

January 10, 2022

MSHSAA Broadcast Email

To: Superintendents, Principals, Athletic Directors, Athletic Trainers, School Nurses

Subject: Significant Changes To the MSHSAA Covid19 Return To Play (RTP) Form – Protocol

Date: January 10, 2022

On Monday, January 3, 2022 an email broadcast was sent to “Athletic Directors” to clarify a number of questions the MSHSAA office had received relative to whether there would be changes to the MSHSAA Return To Play (RTP) form or the return to play stages/progression based on the updated CDC guidance, released in late December-2021, for individuals who test positive for Covid-19. Since the release of this email broadcast on January 3, 2022, the medical professionals on our MSHSAA Covid19 Task Force expressed a desire to continue discussions and an interest to do some additional research on the updated CDC guidance and revisit the RTP form.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE MSHSAA COVID-19 RETURN TO PLAY FORM/PROTOCOL

At this time, **January 10, 2022**, the MSHSAA Covid19 RTP form and RTP stages/progression has been updated and changed. As a reminder, the use of this RTP form and RTP stages/progression is “**MANDATORY**” for a student that “**tests positive**” for Covid19 **AND participates in any sport or activity that requires a pre-participation physical exam.**

The “**NEW**” MSHSAA Covid19 Return To Play form is now posted at www.mshsaa.org on the Sports Medicine page under the category “Covid19 Resources”. Below is summary of the changes/updates that have been made to the RTP form and RTP stages/progression and is effective immediately.

- **Quarantines:** In conjunction with recommendations from the CDC, an athlete may be eligible to start the return to play stages/progression and be released from quarantine after **5 days** have passed since symptoms first appeared **AND has had no fever (≥100.4F) for 24 hours without fever reducing medication**

and significant improvement of mild symptoms (cough, runny nose, sore throat), **OR**, Student never had symptoms but tested positive and has been 5 days since positive test.

- **Approved Healthcare Professional:** Prior to starting the RTP stages/progression, the student **MUST** be screened by a licensed health care professional that include an **MD, DO, PAC, ARNP, AT**. We have now added the ability of a licensed athletic trainer to screen the athlete prior to the start of the progression. Screening includes answering 5 questions about symptoms they may be experiencing. Evaluations/assessments from one of the approved healthcare professionals, to start the return to play stages/progression, may be conducted in person OR may now also be conducted through the phone or a tele health visit by the health care professional if deemed appropriate by the healthcare professional.
- **RTP Stages/Progression:** Once a student has met either of the initial 5 day requirements (per bullet #1 above) **AND** has been released by one of the approved healthcare professionals, they may begin the “FIVE” RTP stages/progression that will occur during days 6-10. **During days 6-10, while completing the RTP stages/progression, the student MUST remain masked, in accordance with CDC guidelines, which includes being around coaches, teammates and medical staff. If the physical activity/training, at any of the RTP stages/progression, is not done in close proximity to others, a mask is not required.** Notice that the duration of the RTP stages/progression has been decreased from 7 days to 5 days. This means if a student has had a very mild infection where symptoms resolved quickly or did not have symptoms but tested positive that they could be eligible to return to the sport as early as 10 days following the start of the symptoms or from their positive test if they had no symptoms. This shortens the potential time out of sport by a week for the majority of athletes.
- **Additional Reminders:** As a reminder, and has been the case since the initial Covid19 RTP form was in place, the student must not have been hospitalized for COVID-19. If so, they will need to have written clearance from their physician prior to the start of activity. If an appropriate healthcare professional, MD/DO/PAC/ARNP/AT, answers “YES” to any of the evaluation/assessment questions, further evaluation/assessment may be needed

as they may be indicating a more concerning condition during which exercise may not be appropriate.

The MSHSAA Covid19 Task Force will continue to review the clearance process periodically and update, as appropriate, in accordance with guidance from national organizations.

Listed below is a link that will take you directly to the new MSHSAA Covid19 Return To Play Form

[MSHSAA Covid-19 RTP Form](#)

Respectfully,

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